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8 *Professor Porson not the author of "Devil's Thoughts."* [Jan.

for citing Shakespeare. I coincide most decidedly with your correspondent Marcellus; not that the authority of Shakespeare has any undue weight or influence with me; but merely from being fully convinced of the truth of his observations, and never having any experience to the contrary. I even doubt the possibility of having such experience, for I have never known or heard of any one who was not in some degree pleased with music, (except in the case of Porcia's friend) much less any who disapproved of it. I rather imagine it impossible to produce a single instance wherein music had lost all its effect, having neither charms to please, nor power to move. From Porcia's reasoning upon this subject, one would be inclined to suppose man to be a creature whose nature is so absolutely perfect as not to stand in need of, or be benefited by relaxation or amusement. It is a notorious fact, that in his present state, man cannot long exist without relaxation and repose; and consequently he is not capable of vigorous, uninterrupted, and continued exertion. As Æsop very justly observes, that a bow, by being always bent, is in a great measure rendered useless, so the mind, by being continually engaged, is by that means more enfeebled and enervated than by enjoying seasonable relaxation and refreshment. There is nothing better calculated to unbend and relax the mind than music; it ought therefore in a moderate degree, to be indulged in by all who have any regard to their health. There is nothing more hurtful or dangerous to health than close application, when continued for a length of time. Porcia says music is too trifling and unimportant to spend any time with; but I would ask, can time be better employed than in the prolongation of life? Close and intense application

to study has hurried many to an untimely grave; whereas, perhaps, if they had indulged a little more in so pleasant and innocent an amusement, it might have tended to lengthen their days. Porcia appears to think it criminal to indulge in a taste for music, or to practise it at all; but I will only ask her how many ways time might be worse spent than in indulging a taste for the finest of the liberal arts? But perhaps her reasoning proceeds from its abuse; in this I agree with her; for the use of any thing is perverted by its abuse. A moderate indulgence in music is certainly innocent and unblameable, but on the contrary, to allow it to engross more of our time and attention than what is either necessary or consistent, is very reprehensible.

METELLUS.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

County Down, Ireland,
Dec. 1813.

GENTLEMEN,

HAVING observed in your last number of the Belfast Monthly Magazine, a misstatement respecting a little poem called "The Devil's thoughts," I beg leave to correct the same. The late Professor Porson was not the author of it. The author is now living in England, and is a man of considerable celebrity in literature. It would be improper, without his permission, to divulge his name on the present occasion, especially as the *jeu d'esprit* in question, was written in his very youth, and by way of a mere college badinage. This, be assured, is the fact; and though I wish not to make public my name, the gentleman who delivers this letter, will privately satisfy you as to the authority upon which I speak. The gentlemen who communicated the poem to your

1814.] *Request for an Epitaph on the late Mr. James Gilland.* 9

work may also be assured, that the mistake will doubtless be considered as totally undesigned, and that however eminent the real author of the poem may now be, he cannot, I think, but feel it as excessively flattering, that so youthful a production of his, should, for a moment, be attributed to one of such genius and learning, as was the late Professor Porson.

I am, &c.

A VISITOR.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

BEING asked for a something, in the way of inscription, for the tomb stone of the late Mr. James Gilland, of Dungannon, the stanzas below are the fruit of my attempt to comply with the request. I feel it impossible to please myself; and I beg the insertion of the following Epitaph, in the Belfast Magazine, in order to extract from eminent genius, one that may have some corresponding sublimity with its subject. Gilland deserves the effort of a master pen. I wish the writer of the first part of the Retrospect of Politics would give a few moments to it.

The characteristic qualities of the deceased, were, exquisite taste, vivid and capacious mental powers, with an enlightened and devoted patriotism.

HOMO.

EPITAPH.

HERE, mute in death's that minstrel tongue,
Which taste and talent used to breathe;
And set that eye which mind-beams flung;
For GILLAND's clay lies underneath.

That patriot heart, whose spring-tide flows
Still swell'd to ERIN's Sun of fame,
And sunk to ERIN's Moon of woes,—
Still'd are its bounds in GILLAND's frame.

BELFAST MAG. NO. LXVI.

But, though that vital orb's quick flight
From human gaze so early stole,
His strains remain—a ling'ring light,
Imperishable as his soul.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

GENTLEMEN,

THERE is a precept which I have always considered necessary to direct my judgment, when I have heard one man accusing another in his absence, it is this, "Audi et alteram partem." Whether you allow the columns of your miscellany to be the vehicles of abuse and misrepresentation, free to any person whose native malignity, or whose wounded pride prompts him to indulge his disposition for reproach and scandal, I cannot tell. I am not in the habit of reading your publication, and therefore know not the principles that guide your choice of "Communications, Original and Selected." A neighbour of mine, however, who makes the Belfast Magazine a part of his reading, has drawn my attention to some communications in that work, which holds up the religious community of which I have the honour to be a member, in an unfavourable light.

I should think, that had you been guided by the maxim quoted, you would not have hastily given publicity to the unqualified and unauthenticated censure thrown with such apparent art and design on the religious body distinguished by the name, Burgher Seceders. Whether the ministers of that communion have such claims on the respect of the public, as should have made you hesitate and examine the evidence upon which the heavy and damning charges of unchristian-like conduct, &c. were built, does not become me to say; let those who know them, pronounce according to

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